

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

*Improving Customer Service in State
Government*

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Customer Service

TAX Overview

- Current staffing consists of 877 Classified and 302 Wage employees
- The agency hires additional Wage employees during peak return filing periods
- Annual revenue collected - \$17.3 billion
- Annual returns and payments processed -
 - Individual – 5.3 million
 - Business – 5.5 million
 - Payments – 3.1 million

Types of Virginia Taxes

- Income
- Corporate
- Sales
- Withholding
- Property
- Litter
- Egg
- Cigarette
- Tobacco Products
- Aircraft
- Estate
- Communication
- Motor Fuel
- Watercraft
- Apples
- Sheep
- Hog
- Peanut
- Cotton
- Vending Machine

Who Are Our Customers?

- Virginia residents
- Non-Virginia residents worldwide
- Business taxpayers worldwide
- Tax professionals
- Localities
- Courts of the Commonwealth
- Governor/Secretary of Finance/General Assembly Members

Why do customers contact TAX?

- General tax questions
- Inquiry about a bill or a refund
- In response to correspondence or an action TAX has taken
- Assistance with registering, filing a return and making a payment
- Questions on tax laws and new legislative changes
- Online support

Contact Center Activities



Customer Contact Statistics

Fiscal Year 2010

- Avg weekly telephone contacts - 12,550
- Peak weekly telephone contacts - 19,652
- Correspondence received - 204,635
- Telephone calls offered - 856,013
- Live Chat offered -110,342
- >50% of inbound contacts are a result of ongoing compliance activity

TAX Performance Measures

TAX has 22 Overall Performance Measures

- Examples:
 - Answer 87 % of inbound phone calls
 - Average mail turnaround time of 25 business days or less
 - Issue 98% of current year refunds for electronically-filed returns within 12 days of receipt
 - Increase the number of taxpayer transactions through TAX's electronic channel
 - Utilize the results of online surveys to measure customer satisfaction
 - Maintain computer system availability (98% or better)
- Other examples:
 - Percentage of variance on the official revenue forecast (2%)
 - Average time to hire

Customer Service Quality Measures

- Track repeat contacts and address reasons for multiple inquiries
- Monitor employees contacts with taxpayers
- Supervisor review and approval of taxpayer account adjustments
- Customer surveys
- Customer contacts

Web-Based Initiatives

Individuals

- **e-File Program** – electronic filing program for both the federal and state personal income tax return – over 2.1 million returns received this year
- **iFile Program** – VATAX online filing program for estimated payments, extension payments and return payments
- **Direct Deposit** – 1.2 million refunds issued this way
- **Direct Debit** – taxpayers can choose a future date to have their payment debited

Web-Based Initiatives

Businesses

- **iFile Program** – online filing program for Sales tax and Employer Withholding tax returns and payments
- **Corporate e-File program** – electronic filing program for both the federal and state corporate tax return
- **Web Upload** – online filing program for bulk upload of sales tax and employer withholding tax returns and payments as well as employer annual W-2 and 1099 statements
- **EFT** – make payments by either ACH credit or ACH debit

Web-Based Initiatives

Bill Payments

- **Quick Pay** – used to pay one or many assessments/bills and view outstanding balances
- **Teleplan** – used to set up a part pay agreement and choose terms

Web-Based Initiatives

Customer Service

- **Live Chat** – online/real-time access to customer service and collection representatives
- **Secure e-Mail** – to communicate via email confidential taxpayer issues
- **Refund Status** – taxpayers can check the status of their income tax refund
- **e-Subscriptions** – used to send taxpayers filing reminders, educational information, promote online services, communicate legislative changes, form changes and other agency initiatives

Taxpayer/Customer Feedback

- Website Surveys – Nonprofit Organizations, e-Subscription, e-Subscription Unsubscribe, Website Usage, i-File for Individual and Business Customers.
- Walk-In Survey
- Live Chat Survey
- Constituent Correspondence

Benefits

Based on the information we receive we can:

- Determine if there are systematic, training or performance issues.
- Determine problems customer are having and also methods to improve
 - Live Chat, e-Subscription, TAX website redesign, were initiated from customer feedback
- Analyze system information to determine how to deploy resources
- Promote and enhance electronic services

Benefits of Web-Based Applications

- 24/7 availability
- Immediate confirmation
- Fewer errors
- Faster refunds
- More efficient way to process returns and payments
- Most economical way to operate

Challenges

- Resources (Human and Capital)
- Meeting customer expectations
- Customer diversity
- Quality management/measurement
- Maintaining a trained workforce to respond to very technical questions
- Insuring customer issues are resolved on initial contact

Lessons Learned

- Get what you ask for (quality vs. quantity)
- Keep it simple
- Our actions have a significant impact on Virginia taxpayers
- Taxpayers expect and demand quality customer service
- Electronic interaction is (generally) better for everyone